Dangers of Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning affects children under the age of six the most because they still have developing brains and nervous systems and toxic substances can negatively affect their development. The blood brain barrier has not fully formed by the age of six, which increases the chances of severe damage due to lead exposure. A child's body can absorb up to 50% of the lead ingested. Adults do not absorb lead like children do, however their bodies can absorb between 10-15% of ingested lead.

Women who are pregnant and exposed to lead are at risk for passing it on to the fetus. Lead exposure can be harmful to the fetus because lead is able to cross the placenta, causing the amount of lead ingested by the child to be up to 50% attributed to the fetal absorption. Exposure to lead during the prenatal period hurts the development of the child after being born, making it especially important for pregnant women to avoid lead ingestion and exposure.

There are a large number of people working in jobs that expose them to lead. Workers may ingest and inhale lead dust and fumes, as well as bring it from their job sites into their homes. Proper protection should be applied to lead exposed industries to prevent any health complications. It is estimated that over one million workers are exposed to lead everyday at their jobs in industries like painting, construction and renovation, lead smelters, battery plants, auto repair, plumbing, and firing ranges.

Lead poisoning does not affect just people, it also affects the environment. The toxic metal is not able to dissolve in water or biodegrade, dissipate, decay or burn. This makes lead an extremely harmful hazard. The lead that gets in to the soil ends up staying there of a long time since it does not break down.